

# March Bulletin

Issue 3

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Transparency International  
Fiji

*"Say Yes to Integrity and No to Corruption"*

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**Bula Vinaka! Namaste!**  
Welcome to Issue No. 3 of  
the 2010 TI Fiji Bulletin.

The month of March has witnessed significant changes in our staffing, projects including NICE and strengthening capacity building relationships. You will find all the details of last month events in this Bulletin.

### This Issue:

- Signing of MOU with Ministry of Youth & Sports
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- Farewell to NICE Colleagues
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## SIGNING OF M.O.U WITH MINISTRY OF YOUTH and SPORTS



(L-R) TI Fiji Board of Director Rosie Langi, Department of Youth and Sports Director Makareta Sauturaga, ALAC Legal Officer Marama Tuisawau

Transparency International Fiji through its Advocacy Legal Advisory Centre (ALAC) programme signed a Memorandum of Understanding on the 6th of April 2010 with the Department of Youth and Sports. This was witnessed by the Director from the Department of Youth and Sports Mrs Makareta Sauturaga, TI Fiji Board of Director Rosie Langi,

Acting Executive Officer/Programme Officer Zena Sherani and Acting PD Director/Legal Officer Marama Tuisawau. The purpose of this alliance is to enable TI Fiji to utilize office space provided by the ministry in Lautoka and Labasa and in return TI Fiji through its ALAC Programme would accept intake of volunteers from the Ministry to do

placement work. Both parties also pledged to support one another through their awareness campaign. For TI Fiji this has been an important milestone in enhancing our capacity to work with government ministries like the Ministry of Youth and Sports in implementing activities through training programmes, information sharing and networking.

## Open Budget Initiative

Transparency International Fiji in association with Open Budget Policies Priorities Centre has been engaged in a Open Budget Initiative Survey in gathering data on the level of transparency of state in the budget process since June 2009. In September of last year, the data was submitted

to the Open Budget Initiative staff who then had provided the data to peer reviewers to review data which would then be returned back to the Open Budget Initiative (OBI) Staff. In March of the current year the Programme Officer at TI Fiji was asked by the OBI

staff to respond to queries and clarifications as highlighted by peer reviewers. This has been submitted with the help of a researcher. Further updates will be provided on the publication of the results from the survey in the next bulletin.

## Strategic Planning Meeting

“...to formulate an ambitious but achievable plan in the next three years...”

On the 12<sup>th</sup> of March, TI Fiji held its Strategic Planning Meeting which was attended by the board of directors and staff. The purpose of the meeting was to formulate an ambitious but achievable plan in the next three years. For TI Fiji this depends largely on the availability of our manpower and fiscal resources in order to produce measurable results. Staff and directors were given an oppor-

tunity to interact amongst themselves and were divided into groups and allocated a strategic goal each whereby they were required to present their work after group discussions. The outcome of the meeting is that a revised Strategic Planning guide and budget is being drafted which will be presented and finalized in the upcoming Monthly Board Meeting to take place on Wednesday, May 19<sup>th</sup>, 2010.



For the month of March, the Advocacy and Legal Advisory Centre team have worked around the clock in updating database for clients on a

regular basis. In addition to this they have referred clients to relevant organizations for their cases and also provided an update to clients on the progress of their case.

**ALAC phone line is 3584 975 or visit their office at 62 Pratt Street, Suva.**

Legal Officer: Marama Tuisawau  
Programme Officer: Tokasa Ramaqa

### Annual General Meeting

*The proposed date for the AGM has been set on June 4<sup>th</sup>, 2010 from 5pm-7pm; Reserve Bank, T11 Conference Room. All members are welcome and encouraged to attend.*

### Annual Report

Preparations are well underway by TI Fiji in publishing its 2010 annual report. All staff have provided their input and are compiling bits of information to get the report in order. Sponsorship for the report will need to be met as publishing costs will be incurred. It is hoped that the Annual report will be released in the first week of June 2010.

## Transparency International Asia Pacific Regional

Preparations are well underway by Transparency International Fiji for the Transparency International Asia Pacific Regional three-day meeting to be held from May 4<sup>th</sup> to 7<sup>th</sup> in New Delhi, India. Representing TI Fiji are Programme Officer Zena Sherani and ALAC Legal Officer Marama Tuisawau. At the meeting representatives

hope to explore synergies and shared interests within and between sub-regions. They also hope to bring participants together along thematic interests and capacity development needs and to allow opportunity for outreach in the host country, through external advocacy, partnership and coalition building.

## The link between Earth Hour and Corruption

TI Fiji was invited by the World Wide Fund (WWF) to collaborate with them during the Earth Hour programme at Sukuna Park on the 27<sup>th</sup> of March 2010 creating awareness on how corruption and climate change were linked. TI Fiji's involvement was about creating awareness that in many sectors in society, corruption did contribute to

the exploitation and destruction of the environment. We needed to remain hopeful that there are avenues to deal with this through TI Fiji conducting advocacy work on good governance principles. To support this initiative in October of this year, TI Fiji will be part of a Forestry project where it will be engaged in dialogue with stakeholders. This will

include educating them about having access to sound knowledge and tools relating to forest management and timber trade systems. This will in a way enable stakeholders to monitor and advocate for good governance practices in Forest Law Enforcement Governance and Trade (FLEGT) and other sustainable forest management initiative.

# National Initiative on Civic Education (NICE)

Drama auditions took place on Saturday the 6<sup>th</sup> March in the Northern Division. Programme Officer Zena Sherani headed towards Savusavu where four groups auditioned at Yaroi Village Hall. The Fiji Times was present to provide coverage for the story. Meanwhile Setaita Tavanabola TI Fiji volunteer went to Labasa whereby seven groups showed up for the auditions at Kshatriya Hall, Sagar Street. Findings from the field in audition areas including Suva, Nadi, Labasa and Savusavu revealed that (1) topic areas are new to youths; (2) youths indicated that they were not confident and some indicated that they needed a coach to assist them to come up with a concept of drama (3) Civic education has not reached some areas (4) Youths excluded from Civic



TI Fiji Volunteer Andrew Wallace (3rd from left) with 'The Challenge' Volunteers

education (5) Youths signing up for auditions and not turning up (6) Age-group seemed to be a problem as many organizations had their own constitutions indicating that youths were from 16-45. Hence this explained the lack of interest shown by youths in participating in the drama competition. Therefore in association with UNDP NICE (National Initiative on Civic Education), Transparency International Fiji has discontinued with its drama operations and switched to creating the much needed awareness through conducting workshops along the Suva-Nausori corridor and Lami area for youths. Keep a look out for our next bulletin featuring photos of the workshop and comments received from participants from the field.

## Farewell to UNDP NICE Colleagues

On Wednesday the 31st of March 2010, NICE implementing partners gathered at Kadavu House to farewell Mark Borg the Programme Manager and Mike Zulu the project Co-ordinator of the NICE project. Programme Officer Zena Sherani represented Transparency International Fiji at the occasion whereby implementing partners had all brought a dish each to celebrate the farewell. Others present at the meeting included UNDP Governance, Finance section and UNDP NICE

officials. Speeches were delivered by UNDP officials and Ms Sherani on behalf of all partners. Mr Borg and Mr Zulu also said a few words and thanked all staff and partners for their co-operation with the NICE project. Transparency International Fiji would like to take this opportunity to thank both Mr Borg and Mr Zulu for their time, patience, advice, assistance and availability in attending meetings to answer queries relating to the project. We wish them well for the future.



(L) NICE Programme Officer Mark Borg and (R) NICE Programme Coordinator Mike Zulu

## Budget Transparency Workshop

Transparency International Fiji was invited by Citizen's Constitution Forum (CCF) to conduct a presentation on "Monitoring the Government Budget" at Tailevu Provincial Office on Tuesday the 30th of March 2010. Programme Officer Zena Sherani accompanied by TI Fiji volunteer Setaita Tavanabola represented TI Fiji at the session. Other speakers who were present and spoke on budget related issues included Foundation of

the Peoples of the South Pacific International, Ministry of Finance, School of Governance, University of the South Pacific and CCF. The outcome of the workshop is that plans are underway to publish a simple manual budget booklet which is user friendly and easily understood by the grass roots people with it being also translated in the vernacular languages and made accessible to them.

# UNDP Pacific Center

As part of the UNDP continued effort to engage and provide support to civil society as one of the key elements in MDG promotion, the UNDP Pacific Centre conducted a review on UNDP's engagement with civil society organizations. This was made possible through a group of randomly selected NGO's including ECREA, CCF, Save the Children's Fund, National Council of Women/UNIFEM, PCDF and Transparency International Fiji - being invited to engage in a discussion on Thursday 18<sup>th</sup> of March at the UNDP Pacific Centre (level 7 Kadavu House) from 9.00am to 11.00am. Questions were based on (1) assessing various modalities that the Pacific Centre has employed in its engagement with CSOs, the effectiveness (including cost effectiveness to the extent relevant and possible) of different approaches and modalities of its engagement through various practice areas and projects (2) Reviewing other donors

and UN agencies' engagement with civil society, including their small grant schemes, capacity building activities, and innovation in engaging civil society in the Pacific (3) Drawing some insights and lessons learned from within the Centre as well as other donors and UN agencies to inform on how the Centre could support CSOs in developing their capacity to better engage in regional and national policy processes and development activities (4) Contribute to the UNDP general knowledge development - particularly for the Oslo Governance Centre and the Civil Society Unit of the Bureau of Partnership -- on how UNDP engages civil society in its program activities. The outcome of the meeting as highlighted included CSO's highlighting positive and negative responses in its engagement with UNDP and proposed recommendations for their working relationship with UNDP in the future.

## Farewell for Andrew



Transparency International Fiji organized a farewell for one of its international volunteer's, Andrew Wallace. Andrew joined the team in October 2009 and assisted in writing media publications, conducting presentations on behalf of TI Fiji and assisting with the NICE project. In a short span Mr Wallace had contributed a lot to TI Fiji's growth and we would like to wish him all the best for his future endeavour.

## EO on Maternity Leave



(L-R) TI Fiji Board of Directors Chair Mr Aidney, TI Fiji Executive Officer Koila Kabu, Programme Officer Zena Sherani

EO on Maternity Leave TI Fiji Executive Officer Mrs Koila Kabu went on maternity leave from March till end of June 2010. The staff treated her to morning tea and a baby shower. Zena Sherani is currently the acting Executive Officer and Marama Tuisawau is the acting ALAC programme Director. We wish Mrs Kabu a safe delivery and to look forward to her return in June.

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## Have Your Say



ALAC Intern, Ema Lagilevu

I first heard about TI Fiji last year when they were launching their ALAC programme in

April. I had previously been a volunteer with the Hibiscus Committee in 2006 and 2007. I did a short stint with a new local magazine company as a Fashion editor early last year and I was also part of the Digicel Promotions Team in 2008 and 2009. I've always wanted to do volunteer work with an NGO and I'm grateful that TI Fiji has allowed me to do just that. My experience with TI Fiji has been phenomenal; I've been able to learn the level of commitment, time and energy it takes in conducting awareness campaigns.

I've also had the privilege of working with professionals who devote their time in assisting victims/witnesses of corruption. I am a legal intern for TI Fiji's ALAC programme and my main responsibilities include: assisting the Legal Officer in attending to clients and drafting of letters, providing assistance to the Programme Officer, being in charge of volunteers that may require training for ALAC, assisting and helping facilitate the organizing of workshops. The greatest thing about working at TI Fiji is that although you're given the freedom to be yourself the wealth of experience and the level of qualification that the staff members has demands that you always give your best every single day and this always keeps you on your toes. The other great thing about TI Fiji is the staff members; they are supportive and very positive people.